DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 310 412 CS 212 063

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TITLE Conformity in the Newsroom--A Fresh Look.
PUB DATE Aug 89
NOTE 54p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (72nd, Washington, DC, August 10-13, 1989). Best available copy.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attitude Measures; Case Studies; *Editors; Employer Employee Relationship; *Newspapers; *News Reporting; Organizational Communication; *Political Attitudes; Press Opinion; Q Methodology; Questionnaires
IDENTIFIERS *News Reporters

ABSTRACT

To investigate the role of newspaper executives in influencing reporters' political perceptions and coverage of political news, a study examined whether reporters and their executives tend to hold similar views on major domestic and foreign policy issues. Two instruments were developed: a 45-card Q-deck containing liberal, conservative, and pragmatic viewpoints; and a questionnaire concerning types and frequencies of communication between staffers and executives. Three midwestern newspapers were chosen--one small, one medium, and one large, in terms of circulation. Subjects were the managing editors of the three newspapers, 14 editors, and 49 staffers. Results indicated that there is widespread diversity among journalists on political topics and that political conformity did not appear to exist in the three newsrooms in the study. (Three tables of data provide the Q-factor analysis of responses of small newspaper participants. (SR)

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Conformity in the Newsroom--A Fresh Look

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ABSTRACT

Newspapers and executives of small, medium and large newspapers were compared on their political views using two instruments--a 45-card Q-Deck containing liberal, conservative and pragmatic viewpoints, and a questionnaire concerning types and frequencies of communication between staffers and executives. Results indicate that there is widespread diversity among journalists on political topics and that the political conformity did not appear to exist in the three newsrooms in the study.

CONFORMITY IN THE NEWSROOM--A FRESH LOOK

Introduction

Freedom of the press has never been absolute. The mass media system in every country is subject to certain basic statutory controls including defamation, copyright, obscenity, and sedition laws. Almost everyone--including journalists--nods in agreement with such restrictions, believing that even a free system should not permit the channels of mass communication to defame the innocent, steal literary property, outrage common morality, or incite treason.

However, there are other controls on mass media that have invited criticism. These include control through support by advertisers, control through favors to newspeople, manipulation of news by public relations people, coercion of the press by pressure groups, and management of news and editorials by publishers or their representatives. Of these controls the last mentioned is most subtle because it is achieved through indirect means.

The owner of an agency of mass communication is entitled to whatever policy he or she wants, so long as it is legal or not in conflict with rules and regulations. There is not much evidence that audiences become concerned about editorial policy--about the particular stands newspapers, magazines, or broadcasters may take in the columns devoted to opinions.[1] The cause for concern becomes legitimate when channels of mass media allow opinions to slip over into news columns of newspapers and magazines, and into the supposedly unbiased programs on radio and television.

Warren Breed has pointed out that news policy is not spelled out and that staffers have to figure it out for themselves.[2] According to Breed they learn through socialization. They learn what is expected of them so as to win rewards and avoid punishment. They learn it through news conferences, house organs, and interpersonal interaction which provides clues to the characteristics, interests, and affiliation of their executives.[3]

It is commonplace for lay people to observe that the direction of news policy is correlated with the publisher's attitude toward political events, issues and personalities. In other words, the public may think that a conservative publisher would like his/her staff to cover events with a "conservative" angle.

Several studies support newspaper publisher's active involvement in the newsroom. David Bowers has found that the publisher's activity is higher in the newsroom of a small newspaper than in those of medium and large-sized publications.[4] Lewis Donohew finds that the publisher's opinion is contained not only on the editorial page but also in the news columns.[5] Breed indicates that subtle channels of communication enable staff members to perceive the publisher's attitude.[6]

Once staffers on a newspaper realize that it is in their interest to accurately predict the publisher's attitude, it is likely that with the passage of time there may develop a correspondence between theirs and the publisher's attitude toward political issues, events and personalities. Also, a publisher to ensure that his/her political attitudes are being reflected in the

newspaper's news and editorial pages, may be tempted to hire executives and staffers who show signs of correspondence with their attitudes. Suraj Kapoor points out that in a newspaper where there are various channels of communicatien, staffers and publishers have similar attitudes toward selected issues and events.[7]

Another study done on Indian newspapers concluded: 1) staffers on the three Indian newspapers appear to perceive their newspaper's policy although it is not stated explicitly but implied, 2) staffers at the small newspaper perceived the policy more accurately than their colleagues on the medium and the large newspapers, 3) staffers on the small newspapers kept the newspaper's stand in mind while handling a news item, 4) senior and elderly staffers appeared to perceive the policy more accurately than their junior colleague which would suggest that the process of internalization may have been at work.[8]

However, these studies did not reach any solid conclusions. The first study only established a tentative relationship between available channels of communication and the staffers in correspondence with the publisher's attitude, while the second study concerned Indian newspapers which are managed much differently from American newspapers. Thus, the Breed study done in 1955 still stands as the major data base for arguing that staffers will, over time, assimilate the political views of their editors and publishers.

More recently researchers have investigated reporters' performances and concluded they are influenced by their superiors' priorities.[9] Sigal contends that editors pressure reporters to change stories based on complaints from sources.[10] Others have indicated that reporters regarded their superiors as one of the most important influences on the definition of news.[11] Dimmick and Coit have pointed out that editors influence the work of reporters by virtue of their organizational positions.[12]

However, these studies have not dealt with the role of the newspaper executives in influencing reporters' political perceptions so that they (reporters) consciously or unconsciously conform to executives' perceptions while covering political events, issues and personalities. Thus, we attempted to determine if reporters and their executives tend to hold similar views on major domestic and foreign policy issues. It should follow from the review of literature that if editors are placing pressure on reporters to conform to the newspaper's political position that we would find a political viewpoint that reporters and their superiors shared. Furthermore, we should find that staffers face pressures to conform to the political views of their editors.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

In order to test the notion that reporters and their superiors have assimilated a common world view of political events, we chose a case-study approach in which we examined the political beliefs of editors and reporters at three mid-western newspapers. We selected a small newspaper (circulation under 25,000), a medium

newspaper (circulation under 100,000) and a large newspaper (circulation 100,000+).[13] The newspapers agreed to participate in the study on the provision of confidentiality.

A case-study approach seemed most appropriate since simply surveying editors and reporters across a large number of newspapers would not really answer the question of whether editors and reporters at any given newspaper hold roughly the same political viewpoints. Thus, we have chosen a small sample methodology for the study. Our method is adopted from William Stephenson's use of Q-sort and Q-factor analysis and is similar to the approach used by Cragan and Shields in their research on American political communication.[14]

Two research instruments were developed. A 45-card Q-deck was constructed which contained a conservative, liberal and pragmatic view over 15 foreign policy and domestic issues. The issues are: government regulation of industry, the major threat to world peace, obscenity, marijuana, free trade, crime, abortion, separation of church and state, "star wars", Middle-East, welfare, and the homeless. Statements 1-15 are conservative, 16-30 are liberal and 31-45 are pragmatic. These issues were selected because of their dominance in newspaper stories over six months prior to data collection. Once the 45 statements were developed they were pre-tested to ensure that a conservative, liberal and pragmatic position was discreetly portrayed for each of the 15 issues. Forty journalism students at a mid-western university were asked to sort the cards into three piles (conservative,

liberal and pragmatic). If a card was accurately classified by 90 per cent of the subjects, it was retained. If not, it was re-written until it was accurately perceived to represent correct political viewpoints.

The editors and reporters in the study sorted the statements on a forced choice continuum from most reflective to least reflective of their view of American politics. Our 45-item forced distribution was: 1-3-5-8-11-8-5-3-1 for a 9-category sort.[15]

The second instrument is a questionnaire that quantifies the frequency and type of communication between news executives and staffers (reporters, copyeditors). Also, the questionnaire probes the influence editors may exert over reporters in handling news stories.

The managing editors of the 3 newspapers, 14 editors and 49 staffers comprised our sample. The sample is best characterized as an availability sample in that the subjects that were used in our study were the ones that were available in the newsroom the day we gathered the data. However, we did secure subjects from both day and evening shifts at all three newspapers. The small newspaper sample contained 2 editors and 14 staffers. The medium newspaper sample was 4 editors and 20 staffers. The large newspaper sample comprised 5 editors, 6 assistant editors and 15 staffers.

DATA ANALYSIS

Q-Factor Analysis of Journalists on Three Newspapers.

Small Newspaper: The data from the small newspaper (comprising 16

subjects) was Q-Factor analyzed by means of Tubergen's Quanal Program for Q-Analysis, providing the principal components solution with varimax rotation to simple structure and a Weighted Rotational Analytical Procedure that ranked statements for each factor by means of descending Z-Scores. The factor analysis produced a three-factor solution. The first factor accounted for 58% of the variance and six staffers loaded on that factor. The second factor accounted for 25% of the variance and the sorting behavior of the two editors and two staffers was explained primarily by this factor. The third factor accounted for 17% of the total variance and six staffers loaded on this factor. The correlation between the three factors was very low. The first factor correlation to the second factor was 14%, and 33% with the third factor. The correlation between the second and third factor was 27%.

As Table I displays, the six staffers loading on Factor I strongly accept liberal views on Star Wars and Nicaragua (see cards 24, 25) They strongly reject the conservative positions on Star Wars, Nicaragua and threat of international communism (see cards 10, 39 and 2). On the Middle-East they believe we should negotiate with all parties including the P.L.O. and the Soviets, or they feel that we should a take hands-off policy (see cards 43, 28). On domestic issues, they take the conservative position on welfare and obscenity (see cards 13, 3).

The two editors and two staffers loaded on Factor II. This factor was very distinct from Factor I and III as Table 1 depicts. The four people loading on this factor believe very strongly in

free trade (see card 5), while the rest of the newsroom is opposed to it. Also they take the conservative position on excessive government regulations, federal job programs, Nicaragua and abortion (see cards 1, 12, 10, 5). However, on obscenity they take a liberal position (see card 18).[16]

Factor III portrays a predominantly liberal view of American domestic politics. The six staffers loading on this factor strongly accept the liberal position on the protection of American jobs, crime, welfare, the homeless and abortion (see cards 20, 16, 21, 29, 22,).

They also reject conservative positions on the Middle-East, free trade, and governmental regulation (see cards 13, 5, 12). They take a pragmatic position on Star Wars while rejecting the liberal position on this issue (see cards 39, 24).

Table 1 here

Medium Newspaper. The medium-size newspaper sample contained 4 editors and 20 staffers. Their sorting behavior produced a 5-factor solution with little correlation between the 5 factors. Factor I is only 24% like Factor II, 11% like Factor IV, and 27% like Factor V. However, it is 54% like Factor III. So, there are four distinct political viewpoints in the medium-size newsroom. Factor I accounted for 54% of variance within the 5-Factor solution. Factor II accounted for 18%, Factor III 12%, Factor IV 8%, and Factor V was also 8%. Unlike the small

newspaper, the 4 editors on the medium-size newspaper loaded on four different factor types, meaning that they are participating in four different and competing political realities. One executive and 7 staffers loaded on Factor I. When this factor is compared to the other four factors, a unique political viewpoint emerges that these journalists share. Table 2 portrays a liberal, domestic point of view for the subjects loading on Factor I. These 8 subjects are for abortion on demand, feel the government has an obligation to care for the homeless and to train the unemployed (see cards 22, 30, 42). They are for legalization of marijuana and they believe obscenity falls under the protection of the First Amendment (see cards 19 and 18). Also, they worry about separation of church and state which might allow Americans to become victims of moral McCarthyism (see cards 38, 23, 8). Finally, these journalists do not see communism as a major threat to world peace, but instead feel America's tendencies to over-or under-react to world events may be a problem (see cards 2, 32).

While Factor I represents a strong liberal viewpoint on domestic issues, by contrast, Factor II portrays an equally strong conservative viewpoint on both foreign and domestic issues. The 1 editor and 5 staffers who loaded on this factor believe that communism is a major threat to world peace, as Table 2 shows (see card 2). In addition, subjects loading on Factor II take a conservative position on Nicaragua, Star Wars, welfare, and the federal job programs (see cards 10, 9, 14, and

12), while rejecting the liberal position on the same issues (see cards 30, 29, 27, and 24).

Factor III arrays a political viewpoint which is very much "at war" with the previous two factors. The editor and 3 staffers are strongly opposed to Star Wars which is a diametrically opposite position taken by journalists loading on Factor II (see cards 9, 24, and 39). The journalists loading on Factor III uniquely support the right to life issue while the rest of the newsroom takes the opposite position (see cards 7, 22). Political viewpoints represented in Factor III take a pragmatic view on several issues. Journalists sharing this position are for balancing the budget by cutting spending and raising taxes, they are for negotiating with all parties on the Middle-East, they favor training youthful offenders, and would let the government be the employer of last resort (see cards 41, 43, 36, 26, 27). Also, they take a hands-off policy on Central America (see cards 25, 40).

One editor and 2 staffers loaded on Factor IV, and their unique political viewpoints are recorded in Table 2. These journalists strongly believe marijuana is harmful and should remain illegal. However, they might accept decriminalizing it (see cards 4, and 34). These newspersons are not easily classified liberal or conservative. They take a conservative position on government regulations, the homeless and crime, but take a liberal position on foreign policy issues like military spending, the Middle-East, and international trade (see cards 1,

15, 6, 26, 28, and 5). Also, they are liberal on the welfare system (see card 29).

The 3 staffers who loaded on Factor V participate in yet another distinct political vision which is different from the previous four that are present in this mid-size newsroom. As Table 2 reports, this view expresses a strong conservative attitude towards social issues. This view of American politics believes that religion must be strengthened in American society, that obscenity is not a First Amendment right, and that pornography depicting children under 14 should be severely punished (see cards 8, 3, 33). On the other hand, this viewpoint does not think American industry is hampered by unnecessary regulation, nor should the welfare systems be cutback or abortion made illegal (see cards 1, 14, and 7).

Table 2 here

Large Newspaper: The Q-Factor analysis of subjects working on the large newspaper produced a 6-Factor solution. The first Factor accounted for 63% of the variance, II Factor 12%, III Factor 11%, IV Factor 7%, V Factor 6%, and VI Factor 1%. Factors I and V were 70% correlated, while Factor II was only 31% like Factor I, and Factor III was 26% like Factor I.

Factor I is a large dominant Factor in which 6 editors and 8 staffers predominantly loaded. These journalists are strongly in favor of international free trade, with the rest of the newsroom

opposing them as is indicated by their high positive Z-score (1.3) on cards 5 (see Table 3). They also support the idea that obscenity falls under the First Amendment protection (see cards 18, 3). They see a need to reform the welfare system so that children can be fed, housed and educated (see cards 29 and 14). They believe the government should feed and shelter the homeless and military spending should be cut to help solve the deficit problem (see cards 30, 15 and 26). Finally, they do not see communism as a threat to world peace (see card 2).

Factor II has one editor and 2 staffers loading on it. The world view portrayed by this factor is quite different and in conflict with the journalists loading on Factor I, as can be seen in Table 3. The journalists represented by Factor II do not feel U.S. interests are best served by free trade, and they believe the government should not allow American corporations to export American jobs (see cards 5 and 16). They take a conservative position on religion and are pragmatic about negotiations in the Middle-East (see cards 8, 28, 43). Journalists participating in this political reality do not believe American industry is unnecessarily regulated, that Federal Job Programs have not worked and that cutting spending alone will not solve the deficit problem (see cards 1, 12 and 11). Finally, they believe that much of welfare can become workfare (see card 44).

Factor III has 2 editors loading on it. These editors hold almost diametrically opposite views from the editors loading on Factors I and II, as can be seen in Table 3. They strongly

believe we need to cut back on our welfare system because it has too many people who need not be on it (see card 14). They believe American industry is over-regulated, that taxes should be our last choice in solving the deficit problem, that federal training programs are needed and that long-term planning in the U.S. is needed to meet Japanese and European challenges (see cards 1, 11, 42 and 31). In addition, they reject the idea that obscenity is a First Amendment right, that religion needs to be strengthened, that we have a moral commitment to protect Israel, and that marijuana should be legalized (see cards 18, 8, 13, 34 and 19).

One editor loaded on Factor IV primarily because he or she is strongly opposed to most liberal/social programs. The journalist rejects the idea that the government is the employer of last resort, that our government has obligations to shelter the homeless, that American workers need protectionist legislation or that the welfare system should guarantee a minimum income (see cards 27, 30, 29, and 20).

One editor and 4 staffers loaded on Factor V. Although it is 70% like Factor I, there is still plenty of disagreement. Subjects participating in this view of politics strongly support a woman's right to choose an abortion and believe it should remain legal (see Cards 22, 7 in Table 3). Also, they strongly oppose the development of Star Wars and they think that money spent on its development should be spent on social programs (see cards 39, 9, and 24). They are for protectionist legislation and

government housing for the homeless, and they believe that the way to deal with crime is to deal with its root causes (see cards 20, 30, and 21). Last, they reject the conservative positions on Nicaragua and marijuana (see cards 10 and 4).

Factor VI is negatively correlated with the other five factors, which means that the views of the one staffer that loaded on it are quite distinct and intensely held (see Table 3). This staffer perceives communism as a major threat to world peace, especially in Nicaragua, and he/she believes the Star Wars program is a necessary bargaining chip with the Soviets (see cards 2, 10, 39, 24, and 25). This staffer believes abortion is a violation of an individual's right to life and that it should be made illegal (see cards 7 and 22).

Table 3 here

Means Comparisons of Editors and Staffers on Small, Medium and Large Newspapers

Using SPSS-X software, F-Tests were run, comparing the mean sorting behavior of the 17 editors in the study to the 49 staffers for each of the 45 political statements. Statistically significant differences at .05 level between editors and their staff occurred over only two statements. In the first case, editors of the three newspapers strongly reject the idea that the U.S. should take a hands-off policy toward the Middle-East (mean=3.5).[17] However, their staffs also rejected a hands-off

policy, though not as strongly (mean=4.5). The other issue deals with balancing the budget by cutting military and social spending and adding taxes. The editors support this idea, while the staff is on the average, neutral. The editors' mean is 6.7; the staffs' mean is 5.3. These findings are understandable given the fact that the editors were loading across all the different factors as were the staffers. In short, you cannot predict the position of a journalist based on the fact that he or she is an editor or a staffer.

The mean scores of the subjects were compared based on their newspaper size, using the Scheffe-procedure, found in the SPSS-X software package. This was done for each of the 45 statements. The average response of the three newsrooms differed significantly at the .05 level on 12 political statements. On average, all of the journalists support the idea that we need swift and clear punishment of criminals to reduce crimes, but the small newspaper newsroom believes this even more intensely than the large and medium newspapers. On average, journalists reject the idea that taxes should be the last choice for solving the deficit problem, while the small newspaper staff was neutral. Small newspaper employees are for cutting back the welfare system. The journalists on the large and medium newspapers on average believe that the federal government should shelter the homeless while the small newspaper staff is neutral. On the other hand, the newsroom of the small newspaper is much more in favor of turning welfare into workfare than are the workers at

the medium and large newspapers. The editors and staff at the large newspapers are more likely to support a U.S. position of negotiating with all parties in the Middle-East than are the workers at medium and small papers. The journalists at the large newspaper are least likely to believe that a Marxist Nicaraguan government threatens U.S. interests when compared with the staffs at the other two newspapers. When compared to the other two newspapers, the small one is not as strong in its support of separation of church and state. Also, they would provide the least support for the idea that the government should be the employer of last resort, and the least support for the idea that obscenity is protected by the First Amendment. Finally, the medium-size newspaper staff remains neutral on cutting military spending to help the deficit, while the staffs of the other two newspapers support such a decision.

Overall, when the sorting behavior of the 66 subjects is analyzed in terms of mean scores, the journalists tended to reject conservative statements and accept liberal and pragmatic viewpoints. The three most rejected statements are that: (1) most homeless in America choose to live on the streets (mean=3.2); (2) abortion should be illegal (mean=3.3); and (3) Star Wars is needed to counter Soviet missiles (mean=3.7). The three most accepted statements by the journalists at the three newspapers are: (1) we have to get at the root cause of crime (mean=6.8); (2) we need to maintain the separation of church and state (mean=6.3); and (3) we need to provide swift and clear

punishment to criminals to reduce crime (mean=6.3). However, there is so much diversity of opinion among the journalists that it is difficult to point to very many statements on which a majority of them strongly hold the same view. For example, there is only one statement that the majority of journalists strongly accept (+59%) and that is "we need to deal with the root causes of crime," and there are only two statements that the majority of subjects in the study strongly reject and they are: (1) abortion should be made illegal and (2) the homeless choose to live on the street. Political positions expressed on the other 42 cards are diverse and as we indicated in the section above, polarizing.

Frequency and Type of Communication between Editors and Staffers

A look at the data concerning frequency and type of communication between staffers and executives indicates that neither executives nor staffers are concerned that their newspaper's stand is being kept in mind in news coverage. Eighty-two percent of executives at the three newspapers say that they are never concerned about staffers not keeping the newspaper's stand in mind. Seventy-five percent of staffers report that they are not concerned about the newspaper's stand. Nor are staffers and executives unduly worried about consistency in maintaining their newspaper's point of view. Ninety-four percent of executives and 86% of staffers point out that they are either not concerned or just a little concerned about the newspaper's point of view. Executives indicate that they either never ask staffers to keep the newspaper's stand in mind (59%) or

do so once in a while (29%). Staffers echo similar sentiments in that 63% report they have never been told to conform to the paper's policy while 30% mention such a suggestion being given once in a while. Also, staffers note that executives have brought to their notice external complaints about news coverage either "never" (47%) or "once or twice" in the last two months (63.3%).

Concerning the frequency of communication, although a solid majority of executives report they attended news conferences with staffers either a couple of times a week (51%) or once a week (35%), staffers' attendance fluctuates from "some time" (27%) to "once in a long while" (57%). Nevertheless, a solid majority of staffers (85%) say they do attend news conferences, even though not as frequently as executives do. At these conferences executives indicate they express their opinions "most of the time" (59%) and "some time" (29%). However, staffers' opinions at these conferences are not asked frequently as noted by 62% of the newspersons.

Results of our survey indicate that staffers have several opportunities and channels to know about the views of their executives. Besides the news conferences, 67% of staffers report that they talk with executives about political issues from "once a day" to "once a month." However, nearly 75% of staffers say they hardly ever talk to the publisher or managing editor on political topics.

Among the channels of communication, 69% of staffers report

that they get a lot of information about their newspaper's stand by reading their own newspaper; next comes talking with colleagues (30%) followed by talking with senior staffers.

Conclusions

Results from both instruments run counter to the findings of the Breed study: (a) There is a rich political diversity of opinion in the newsrooms of all three newspapers as evidenced by three, five and six Q-factor solutions, and by the lack of consensus among editors and newspersons over 42 of the 45 statements on foreign and domestic issues; (b) at medium and large newspapers, editors were dispersed across a number of factors, so it would be nearly impossible for them to be overtly or covertly protecting a common political point of view on staffers; (c) The communication channels and conformity questionnaire data clearly indicates that the editors do not view themselves as pressuring staffers to conform to the newspaper's political stance on given issues. Furthermore, the staffers report that they are not pressured by their editors to write a story from a particular political angle.

For more than 30 years, the Breed study has led journalism scholars to conclude that through subtle processes of informal channels of communication, staffers come to know and conform to the publisher's and the managing editor's political position on major issues. Our study does not support the Breed study's conclusions. In fact, we found just the opposite.

Editors and staffers hold widely different points of view

and feel no need to conform to the paper's political views. In short, political pluralism is alive and well in the newsroom.

The question this study raises is why our findings in 1989 differ so dramatically from the Breed study of 1955. Could it be that in 30 years, tolerance of independent political thought is more accepted? Have events like Watergate afforded a reporter greater degrees of freedom? Have a new generation of publishers and editors changed the way they manage the newsroom? Finally, the contradictory findings of the two studies might be due to differences in research design. Breed used a qualitative interview technique with a large sample of journalists. We used a small-sample quantitative method to study three newspapers in depth. Although our research design does not allow us to generalize to all newspapers, our three-case study certainly suggests that we need to take a fresh look at political conformity in the newsroom.

Footnotes

1. William L. Rivers and Wilbur Schram, Responsibility in Mass Communication (New York: Harper and Sons, 1969), p. 100.

2. Warren Breed, "Social Control in the Newsroom, a Functional Analysis, "Social Forces, 33:326-35 (May 1955).

3. Ibid.

4. David R. Bowers, "A Report on Activity by Publishers in Directing Newsroom Decision,"Journalism Quarterly, 44:43-52 (Spring 1967).

5. Lewis Donohew, "Newspapers Gatekeepers and Press in News Channel," Public Opinion Quarterly, 31:61-68 (Spring 1967).

6. Breed, Ibid.

7. Suraj Kapoor, "A Satistical Analysis of Staffers' Perception of and Correspondence with Publishers' Attitude," An Unpublished Master's Thesis, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale,P. 46.

8. Suraj Kappor, "Perception of and Conformity to Policy in Indian Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly, 56:388-391 (Summer 1979).

9. Frederick Fico, "Influence of Perceived Editorial Concerns and Role Concept on Source Reliance," Journalism Quarterly, 63:322-330 (Summer 1986).

10. Leon V. Sigal, Reporters and Officials, (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath and Co., 1973).

11. Judee K. Burgoon, Michael Burgoon and Charles Atkin, "The World of Working Journalist", Newspaper Research Project (New York" Newspaper Advertising Bureau, 1982).

12. John Dimmick and Philip Coit, "Levels of Analysis in Mass Media Decision Making," Communication Research, 9:3-32 (January 1982).

Some other studies have been conducted. For instance, Edward J. Trayes, "Managing Editors and Their Newsrooms" A Survey of 208 APME Members," Journalism Quarterly, 55:754-9 (Winter 1978), surveyed 208 Associated Press Managing Editors Association (APME) members. The questionnaires dealt with how managing editors spent their time on the job, and how the newsrooms they worked in were structured. Generally, managing editors at larger newspapers were more managers than editors. Overall, managing editors spent approximately the same amount of time on newspaper content as they did on staff-related duties. D. Charles Whitney, "Information Overload in the Newsroom," Journalism Quarterly, 58:69-76 (Spring 1981), studied a wire service bureau

and a radio station to test his theory that news organizations seek new information for stories more actively when they are underloaded than when they are overloaded with other work. He found that news organizations functioned under stress when they were either overloaded or underloaded, but then performed better when perating between the two extremes.A research done by Ted Joseph, "Reporters'and Editors' Preferences Toward Reporter Decision Making," Journalism Quarterly, 58:219-222 (Summer 1982),examined reporters' roles in newsroom decision-making. Joseph hypothesized that reporters' would feel that management had most of the decision-making control, especially in large papers. He found that smaller papers allowed more reoprter input to decision-making than larger newspapers, where reporters' wants were significantly different than the newspapers' procedures.James Bow and Ben Silver, "Attitudes of News Directors and managing Editors," Journalism Quarterly, 60:533-5 (Autumn 1983),examined the differences between news directors and managing editors, and their attitudes toward the U.S. Supreme Court's decisions on media issues, particularly in the 1979 Herbert v. Lando decision. Results showed that the majority of television and newspaper journalists saw the Supreme Court as slightly or strongly anti-media, and that both groups were very similar in their perceptions of their roles as journalists. Robert A. Peterson, Gerald Albaum, George Kozmetsky and Isabella C. M. Cunningham, "Attitudes of Newspaper Business Editors and General Public Toward Capitalism," Journalism Quarterly, 61:56-65 (Spring 1984), studied how business and financial newspaper editors'attitudes toward capitalism affected their attitudes toward business in general. Researchers found that overall, the majority of newspaper business editors had more positive attitudes toward capitalism than the general public. Research on the differences in selection and variety of new stories between nine national television and newspaper media was conducted by Guido H. Stempel III, "Gatekeeping: The Mix of Topics and the Selection of Stories," Journalism Quarterly, 57:791-6 (Winter 1985). He found while television newscasts and newspapers were similar in their news topic content, they were significantly more varied in their news stories.

Hovever, all these investigations do not touch directly upon the topic we are investigating, but they do demonstrate the need for studying the influence of editors on reporters.

13. Circulation data was taken from Editor and Publisher Annual,1987.

14. William Stephenson, The Study of Behavior: Q-Technique and Its Methodology, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953). John F. Cragan, Donald C. Shields, Quarterly Journal of Speech, 63:275-289 (1977). Also see John F. Cragan, Donald C. Shields, Applied Communication Research: A Dramatistic Approach, (Prospect Heights, Ill., Waveland Press, Inc., 1981), and Stephen R. Brown and Donald J. Brenner, Essay honoring William Stephenson (New York Teachers College Press, 1972).

15. For a discussion of how to administer forced-choice structured Q-deck, see William D. Brooks, "Q-sort Technique" in Philop Emmert and D. Brooks Methods of Research in Communication, (Boston, Houghton Miffin, 1970), pp. 165-81.

16. Z scores, negative or positive, which are higher than 1.0 represent very strongly held views. It means that the subjects would have placed the card as one of their top 6 most rejected or accepted views.

17. Using a 9-cell template, a mean of 1 would be an extreme rejection of an idea, mean of 5 would be neutral, and a mean of 9 would be extreme of acceptance.

Table 1

Q-Factor Analysis of the Small Newspaper

Item Descriptions	Typal Z's		
	1	2	3
N'S FOR EACH TYPE ARE:	6	4	6
1. Our industries cannot compete as long as the government continues to burden industry with unnecessary regulations.	-1.0	1.3	-1.2
2. The threat of international communistic domination is a major threat to world peace.	-1.5	0.4	-0.1
3. Obscenity is not a first amendment right. Society is under no obligation to permit the willful peddling of obscene material.	0.3	-1.4	-0.3
4. Marijuana has little medical value and use of the drug is dangerous from every point of view. It should remain illegal and dealers should be severely prosecuted.	-0.1	0.3	-0.1
5. U.S. consumers are best served by free international trade.	0.2	1.7	-0.8
6. We need swift and clear punishment of criminals to reduce crimes in America.	1.6	1.7	1.7
7. Abortion is a direct violation of an individual's "right to live." We should not have legalized abortion in this country.	-2.2	-0.1	-1.4
8. Religion must be preserved and strengthened in American society.	-0.5	0.2	0.2
9. We must develop a military space defense system (Star Wars) in order to reduce the threat of Soviet defensive missiles.	-2.0	-0.2	-0.2

10.	The situation in Nicaragua demonstrates again that Marxists unchecked will make Central America a Soviet base which threatens American interests.	-1.3	1.1	-0.4
11.	Raising taxes should be our last choice in solving the deficit problem. Cutting social spending and economic growth can solve the problem.	-0.5	0.7	0.2
12.	Federal job programs have not worked. The real jobs must come from the private sector.	-0.6	1.1	-1.2
13.	We have a moral commitment to the protection of Israel. Our Middle East policy must not betray this commitment.	0.3	-0.8	-1.4
14.	We need to cut back the welfare system. It's full of waste and mismanagement. There are many people on it that do not need to be on it.	1.8	0.5	0.2
15.	Most homeless in America choose to live on the street and that is their right.	-1.1	-1.1	-1.6
16.	Americans should not allow corporations to reap big profits while exporting work and denying U.S. workers their fair share of profit.	0.3	-1.1	1.2
17.	A major threat to world peace is foreign policy makers who cannot commit the U.S. to unwanted wars.	-1.0	-1.0	-0.6
18.	Obscenity merely offend personal taste, banning it threatens our freedom of speech.	-0.1	1.1	-0.9
19.	Marijuana should be legalized because it is neither addictive nor can anyone overdose while using it, unlike alcohol, coffee or cigarettes.	-0.9	-2.1	-1.4
20.	We need protectionist legislation to protect American jobs.	-0.6	-2.3	0.6
21.	To reduce crime, we must eliminate its root causes such as unemployment, poor housing, and education.	0.7	0.6	[illegible]

22.	Abortion is presently legal and should remain so; a woman should have freedom of choice in bearing children.	0.3	-0.7	1.0
23.	We cannot permit ourselves to become victims of moral McCarthyism.	-0.2	0.9	0.6
24.	Star Wars is a gross waste of money which could be used for food, medical care, or other social problems.	2.4	-1.0	-1.3
25.	Our hostility toward Nicaraguan government forces them to seek military aid from the Cubans and Soviets. A "hands-off" policy on our part would be best.	1.1	-1.4	-1.2
26.	Military spending must be cut and corporate tax loopholes closed in order to solve the deficit problem.	1.3	0.3	1.3
27.	The role of government is the employer of last resort. The income necessary to live decently is a civil right that the state must guarantee.	-1.1	-1.5	-0.4
28.	The Middle East countries must solve their own problems. We can help by maintaining a hands-off policy.	0.4	-0.2	-1.2
29.	We need to reform the welfare system so that the children can be fed, housed, and educated, and the adults are guaranteed a minimal income.	-0.0	-0.5	1.3
30.	Our government has a basic obligation to provide adequate shelter, food, and clothing for the homeless.	-0.3	-0.6	0.8
31.	Calculated long-term planning between U.S. government, management and labor is necessary to meet Japanese and European competition.	0.7	0.7	0.7
32.	The major threat to world peace is the U.S. tendency to over-or under-react to world events--total war or isolation.	-0.1	-0.6	-1.2
33.	A felony conviction should be imposed on anyone who sells pornography depicting children (under 14) engaged in sexual acts.	0.6	0.2	1.8
34.	Marijuana should be decriminalized but not legalized. We do not want advertising campaigns selling it to our youth.	0.1	-0.8	-0.6

35.	International trade and prosperity are always hurt by pretectionism in the form of trade barriers. We need to negotiate with other countries to lower barriers all around.	0.4	1.3	0.9
36.	Crime goes down as our population ages. But we need intervention programs for youthful offenders.	0.7	0.3	0.5
37.	The question is not legalized abortion but what abortion should be legal and who should pay for it.	0.1	-0.7	-0.2
38.	We must be ensured of a separation of church and state. The personal beliefs of the individual should not affect secular decisions.	-0.5	1.2	0.2
39.	The Star Wars program is an essential negotiating chip necessary to bring the Soviets to the bargaining table.	-1.8	0.0	0.4
40.	We must negotiate a treaty with Central America countries that would protect them from outside influence and guarantee American interests.	-0.0	-0.3	0.0
41.	Budget balancing must come at the expense of both military and social spending in addition to raising taxes.	1.0	1.4	-0.2
42.	We need federal training programs that can prepare America's unemployed for the new jobs that are being created.	0.7	0.4	1.3
43.	In order to strengthen our position in the Middle East we must affirm our willingness to negotiate with all parties, including the PLO and the Soviets.	1.0	-0.7	-0.8
44.	Much of welfare can become workfare and people can be allowed to work their way into economic independence through training and federal jobs.	1.8	1.4	1.6
45.	The government needs to make housing available but the homeless have a right to refuse it.	-0.3	-0.7	0.1

Table 2

Q-Factor Analysis of the Small Newspaper

Item Descriptions	Typal Z's				
	1	2	3	4	5
N'S FOR EACH TYPE ARE:	8	6	4	3	3
1. Our industries cannot compete as long as the government continues to burden industry with unnecessary regulations.	-0.8	0.5	0.0	1.7	-2.1
2. The threat of international communistic domination is a major threat to world peace.	-1.4	1.3	-0.8	0.7	-1.0
3. Obscenity is not a first amendment right. Society is under no obligation to permit the willful peddling of obscene material.	-1.6	-1.6	-0.9	0.2	0.6
4. Marijuana has little medical value and use of the drug is dangerous from every point of view. It should remain illegal and dealers should be severely prosecuted.	-1.5	-1.3	-0.3	0.9	0.6
5. U.S. consumers are best served by free international trade.	0.1	0.8	1.4	-0.4	1.8
6. We need swift and clear punishment of criminals to reduce crimes in America.	0.1	1.0	0.6	2.1	2.0
7. Abortion is a direct violation of an individual's "right to live." We should not have legalized abortion in this country.	-1.8	-1.3	0.6	-1.7	-2.4
8. Religion must be preserved and strengthened in American society.	-1.3	0.0	0.5	-0.2	1.2
9. We must develop a military space defense system (Star Wars) in order to reduce the threat of Soviet defensive missiles.	-1.7	0.5	-2.1	0.2	0.1

10.	The situation in Nicaragua demonstrates again that Marxists unchecked will make Central America a Soviet base which threatens American interests.	-1.1	1.5	-1.1	0.7	0.3
11.	Raising taxes should be our last choice in solving the deficit problem. Cutting social spending and economic growth can solve the problem.	-0.3	0.4	-0.6	-0.7	-0.4
12.	Federal job programs have not worked. The real jobs must come from the private sector.	-0.6	0.7	-1.2	-0.4	0.0
13.	We have a moral commitment to the protection of Israel. Our Middle East policy must not betray this commitment.	-0.1	-0.4	-0.9	-0.6	-1.2
14.	We need to cut back the welfare system. It's full of waste and mismanagement. There are many people on it that do not need to be on it.	-0.5	1.0	-0.5	0.0	-1.4
15.	Most homeless in America choose to live on the street and that is their right.	-1.4	-1.8	-2.2	0.4	0.1
16.	Americans should not allow corporations to reap big profits while exporting work and denying U.S. workers their fair share of profit.	0.1	-0.3	-0.4	0.2	-0.9
17.	A major threat to world peace is foreign policy makers who cannot commit the U.S. to unwanted wars.	-1.2	-1.0	-0.5	-1.7	-0.0
18.	Obscenity merely offend personal taste, banning it threatens our freedom of speech.	2.0	1.9	0.9	-0.4	-0.3
19.	Marijuana should be legalized because it is neither addictive nor can anyone overdose while using it, unlike alcohol, coffee or cigarettes.	0.6	-1.0	-1.1	-1.5	-0.5
20.	We need protectionist legislation to protect American jobs.	-0.9	-1.3	-1.3	-1.7	-1.1
21.	To reduce crime, we must eliminate its root causes such as unemployment, poor housing, and education.	1.7	0.7	1.9	0.8	-0.4

22.	Abortion is presently legal and should remain so; a woman should have freedom of choice in bearing children.	1.8	0.6	-0.6	1.5	1.7
23.	We cannot permit ourselves to become victims of moral McCarthyism.	1.5	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.0
24.	Star Wars is a gross waste of money which could be used for food, medical care, or other social problems.	1.1	-2.0	2.3	-0.2	-1.0
25.	Our hostility toward Nicaraguan government forces them to seek military aid from the Cubans and Soviets. A "hands-off" policy on our part would be best.	0.4	-1.9	1.0	0.2	0.2
26.	Military spending must be cut and corporate tax loopholes closed in order to solve the deficit problem.	0.7	-0.1	0.2	1.6	-0.7
27.	The role of government is the employer of last resort. The income necessary to live decently is a civil right that the state must guarantee.	0.1	-1.1	0.3	-0.6	0.2
28.	The Middle East countries must solve their own problems. We can help by maintaining a hands-off policy.	-0.4	-1.2	-0.1	1.1	0.7
29.	We need to reform the welfare system so that the children can be fed, housed, and educated, and the adults are guaranteed a minimal income.	0.6	-0.5	0.7	1.3	1.1
30.	Our government has a basic obligation to provide adequate shelter, food, and clothing for the homeless.	1.2	-0.7	0.8	0.4	0.9
31.	Calculated long-term planning between U.S. government, management and labor is necessary to meet Japanese and European competition.	0.6	1.4	1.2	0.2	0.8
32.	The major threat to world peace is the U.S. tendency to over-or under-react to world events--total war or isolation.	0.4	-0.6	-0.4	-2.6	-0.9

33.	A felony conviction should be imposed on anyone who sells pornography depicting children (under 14) engaged in sexual acts.	-0.0	1.0	0.2	0.0	1.7
34.	Marijuana should be decriminalized but not legalized. We do not want advertising campaigns selling it to our youth.	0.5	0.4	-0.4	0.8	0.2
35.	International trade and prosperity are always hurt by pretectionism in the form of trade barriers. We need to negotiate with other countries to lower barriers all around.	0.3	0.7	0.4	-0.4	0.1
36.	Crime goes down as our population ages. But we need intervention programs for youthful offenders.	0.1	0.3	1.4	0.2	0.8
37.	The question is not legalized abortion but what abortion should be legal and who should pay for it.	-0.4	0.6	-0.9	-0.9	-1.6
38.	We must be ensured of a separation of church and state. The personal beliefs of the individual should not affect secular decisions.	2.0	0.8	0.2	-0.6	1.7
39.	The Star Wars program is an essential negotiating chip necessary to bring the Soviets to the bargaining table.	-1.0	1.0	-1.3	0.2	-0.4
40.	We must negotiate a treaty with Central America countries that would protect them from outside influence and guarantee American interests.	-0.1	0.7	-0.9	0.0	-0.2
41.	Budget balancing must come at the expense of both military and social spending in addition to raising taxes.	-0.1	-0.5	1.6	0.2	-0.9
42.	We need federal training programs that can prepare America's unemployed for the new jobs that are being created.	0.8	0..	0.6	-0.8	0.5

43. In order to strengthen our position in the Middle East we must affirm our willingness to negotiate with all parties, including the PLO and the Soviets.	0.4	-0.7	0.6	-1.7	0.0
44. Much of welfare can become workfare and people can be allowed to work their way into economic independence through training and federal jobs.	0.6	0.8	1.1	0.4	0.2
45. The government needs to make housing available but the homeless have a right to refuse it.	0.3	-0.3	0.3	0.0	-0.1

Table 3

Q-Factor Analysis of the Small Newspaper

Item	Descriptions	Typal Z's					
6		1	2	3	4	5	6
	N'S FOR EACH TYPE ARE:	14	3	2	1	5	1
1.	Our industries cannot compete as long as the government continues to burden industry with unnecessary regulations.	-1.0	-1.9	0.9	-0.6	-1.7	0.6
2.	The threat of international communistic domination is a major threat to world peace.	-1.7	0.8	-0.6	-0.6	-1.2	2.3
3.	Obscenity is not a first amendment right. Society is under no obligation to permit the willful peddling of obscene material.	-1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.9	0.6
4.	Marijuana has little medical value and use of the drug is dangerous from every point of view. It should remain illegal and dealers should be severely prosecuted.	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	0.6	-1.6	1.1
5.	U.S. consumers are best served by free international trade.	1.3	-1.6	0.0	-0.6	-0.5	0.6
6.	We need swift and clear punishment of criminals to reduce crimes in America.	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.0	1.4	0.6
7.	Abortion is a direct violation of an individual's "right to live." We should not have legalized abortion in this country.	-0.9	1.0	-1.9	-1.7	-2.0	1.7
8.	Religion must be preserved and strengthened in American society.	-0.5	1.8	-0.6	0.6	-0.2	1.1

9.	We must develop a military space defense system (Star Wars) in order to reduce the threat of Soviet defensive missiles.	-1.4	-0.5	0.3	0.0	-1.9	1.1
10.	The situation in Nicaragua demonstrates again that Marxists unchecked will make Central America a Soviet base which threatens American interests.	-1.3	0.1	-0.7	-1.1	-1.8	1.7
11.	Raising taxes should be our last choice in solving the deficit problem. Cutting social spending and economic growth can solve the problem.	-1.3	-1.8	0.7	-1.1	0.3	0.0
12.	Federal job programs have not worked. The real jobs must come from the private sector.	-0.9	-1.0	0.6	1.1	-0.2	0.0
13.	We have a moral commitment to the protection of Israel. Our Middle East policy must not betray this commitment.	-0.2	0.4	-1.3	0.6	0.1	-0.6
14.	We need to cut back the welfare system. It's full of waste and mismanagement. There are many people on it that do not need to be on it.	-1.8	-1.2	1.3	-1.7	-0.2	0.6
15.	Most homeless in America choose to live on the street and that is their right.	-1.9	-0.5	-1.5	0.6	-1.4	0.6
16.	Americans should not allow corporations to reap big profits while exporting work and denying U.S. workers their fair share of profit.	0.1	1.2	-0.3	-0.6	0.2	0.0
17.	A major threat to world peace is foreign policy makers who cannot commit the U.S. to unwanted wars.	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	0.0	-0.7	0.6
18.	Obscenity merely offend personal taste, banning it threatens our freedom of speech.	0.9	-0.3	-1.0	-0.6	0.8	-0.6
19.	Marijuana should be legalized because it is neither addictive nor can anyone overdose while using it, unlike alcohol, coffee or cigarettes.	-0.2	-1.1	-2.2	-0.6	-0.3	-1.1

20.	We need protectionist legislation to protect American jobs.	-1.5	-0.1	-0.3	-1.7	0.1	-0.6
21.	To reduce crime, we must eliminate its root causes such as unemployment, poor housing, and education.	1.8	1.2	1.2	0.6	1.9	-1.1
22.	Abortion is presently legal and should remain so; a woman should have freedom of choice in bearing children.	0.6	-1.6	1.6	1.1	2.3	-1.7
23.	We cannot permit ourselves to become victims of moral McCarthyism.	0.6	-0.3	0.4	1.7	0.7	-1.1
24.	Star Wars is a gross waste of money which could be used for food, medical care, or other social problems.	0.8	0.7	-0.9	0.6	1.6	-1.7
25.	Our hostility toward Nicaraguan government forces them to seek military aid from the Cubans and Soviets. A "hands-off" policy on our part would be best.	0.2	-0.6	-1.5	1.7	0.6	-2.3
26.	Military spending must be cut and corporate tax loopholes closed in order to solve the deficit problem.	1.3	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.6	-0.6
27.	The role of government is the employer of last resort. income necessary to live decently is a civil right that the state must guarantee.	0.4	0.6	-1.2	-2.3	0.1	1.1
28.	The Middle East countries must solve their own problems. We can help by maintaining a hands-off policy.	-0.8	-1.6	-1.2	-1.1	-0.4	-0.6
29.	We need to reform the welfare system so that the children can be fed, housed, and educated, and the adults are guaranteed a minimal income.	1.3	0.9	0.0	-1.1	0.2	-0.6
30.	Our government has a basic obligation to provide adequate shelter, food, and clothing for the homeless.	1.3	0.9	0.3	-1.1	0.7	-0.6
31.	Calculated long-term planning between U.S. government, management and labor is necessary to meet Japanese and European competition.	0.2	2.1	2.2	1.1	0.8	0.0

32.	The major threat to world peace is the U.S. tendency to over-or under-react to world events--total war or isolation.	0.0	-1.8	-0.6	0.0	-0.4	0.0
33.	A felony conviction should be imposed on anyone who sells pornography depicting children (under 14) engaged in sexual acts.	0.2	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.2	0.6
34.	Marijuana should be decriminalized but not legalized. We do not want advertising campaigns selling it to our youth.	0.4	-0.5	-1.2	1.1	0.4	-0.6
35.	International trade and prosperity are always hurt by pretectionism in the form of trade barriers. We need to negotiate with other countries to lower barriers all around.	1.1	-0.5	0.3	-0.6	-0.0	0.0
36.	Crime goes down as our population ages. But we need intervention programs for youthful offenders.	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0
37.	The question is not legalized abortion but what abortion should be legal and who should pay for it.	-0.1	0.0	0.6	1.7	-0.9	-1.7
38.	We must be ensured of a separation of church and state. The personal beliefs of the individual should not affect secular decisions.	1.8	0.6	0.9	0.6	1.4	-1.1
39.	The Star Wars program is an essential negotiating chip necessary to bring the Soviets to the bargaining table.	-1.1	-0.3	0.6	0.0	-1.2	1.7
40.	We must negotiate a treaty with Central America countries that would protect them from outside influence and guarantee American interests.	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	-0.6	-0.4	1.1

41.	Budget balancing must come at the expense of both military and social spending in addition to raising taxes.	0.8	0.7	1.5	2.3	0.4	0.0
42.	We need federal training programs that can prepare America's unemployed for the new jobs that are being created.	0.9	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.9	0.0
43.	In order to strengthen our position in the Middle East we must affirm our willingness to negotiate with all parties, including the PLO and the Soviets.	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
44.	Much of welfare can become workfare and people can be allowed to work their way into economic independence through training and federal jobs.	0.6	1.1	0.3	0.0	0.6	0.0
45.	The government needs to make housing available but the homeless have a right to refuse it.	0.4	0.0	-0.3	0.0	0.7	-1.1